

Coffee Talk



February 12, 2019

“Transitions and Tours”

Head of School: Mr. Dan Quesnel

Director of Teaching and Learning: Dr. Linda Uveges

Upper School Division Coordinator: Mrs. Jennifer Smith

Upper Middle School Coordinator: Mrs. Anita Rish-Hodgkins

Lower Middle School Coordinator: Ms. Ashley Blackmer



Introduction

Purpose of the Coffee Talks

- Parent Education
- Question/Answer Session
- Getting to know those on campus

Future Topics

- **March 20: The ABC's of Accommodations & Testing**

Community Education Resource Page



P.E.R.K.

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Parent Education, Resources, and Knowledge Program

Coffee Talks



Coffee Talks is where parents, the Head of School, and the Director of Teaching and Learning gather on a monthly basis, learn from different experts, and dive deeply into relevant education topics and trends...all while drinking a nice cup of joe, of course!

The next Coffee Talk is scheduled for **Wednesday, January 23** with coffee beginning at 8:00 a.m. followed by a discussion and Q&A at 8:15 a.m. in Dr. Uveges' room in Founders' Hall. It will be led by Dr. Uveges and Mr. Quesnel and will focus on teaching and learning in the digital age.

^ MONTHLY AGENDA

Education Resources



Here you will find a list of articles, videos, and other resources we have compiled to help parents engage productively with their child and school.

✓ HERE'S WHAT'S BREWIN' (HOT TOPICS)

✓ COOL BEANS (HELPFUL RESOURCES)

^ MONTHLY AGENDA

February

Tuesday, February 12

Transitions

Presenters:

Dan Quesnel, Head of School

Dr. Linda Uveges, Director of Teaching and Learning

8:00 - 8:15 a.m. Coffee

8:15 - 9:15 a.m. Discussion and Q&A

Location: Dr. Uveges' Classroom in Founders' Hall (Lower School)

✓ FUTURE COFFEE TALKS

✓ RECAPS

Visible Learning

Visible Learning means an enhanced role for teachers as they become evaluators of their own teaching. According to John Hattie Visible Learning and Teaching occurs when teachers see learning through the eyes of students and help them become their own teachers.

[What Works Best for Learning](#)

[Applying the Evidence](#)

John Hattie's research got a lot of attention from the media linked to the publication of his [Visible Learning meta-study](#). The problem was that many individual aspects of his research were taken and used as a kind of checklist that could magically improve schools. It won't work like that. John Hattie's TED talk "Why are so many of our teachers and schools so successful" can be a good starting point to putting it all in context.

[John Hattie TED Talk](#)



Growth Mindset

Book:

The Gift of Failure - How the best parents learn to let go so their children can succeed

Author:

Jessica Lahey



▼ FUTURE COFFEE TALKS

^ RECAPS

- September - [Maximizing Student Learning](#)
- October - [Transformational Learning](#)
- November - [Growth Mindset](#)
- December - [Teaching and Learning in a Digital Age](#)
- January - [A Look at Curriculum](#)



Recap of Coffee Talk Presentations thus far:

Coffee Talk #1 (September)- Visible Learning

* *John Hattie*

Coffee Talk #2 (October) - Transformational Learning

* *Sir Ken Robinson*

Coffee Talk #3 (November) - Growth Mindset

* *Carol Dweck and Angela Duckworth*

Coffee Talk #4 (December) - Teaching & Learning in a Digital Age

* *Marc Prensky, Ian Jukes, Jennifer Casa-Todd & John Medina*

Coffee Talk #5 (January) - A Look at Curriculum

Grant Wiggins, Jay McTighe, Rick Stiggins, Heidi Hayes Jacobs & Doug Reeves

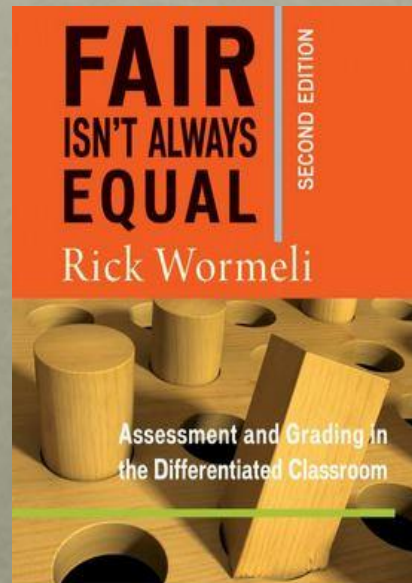
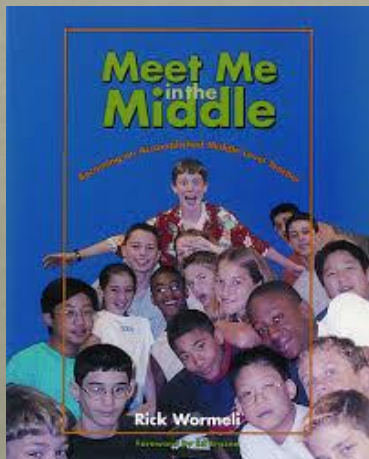
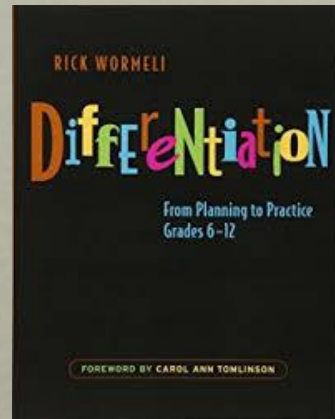
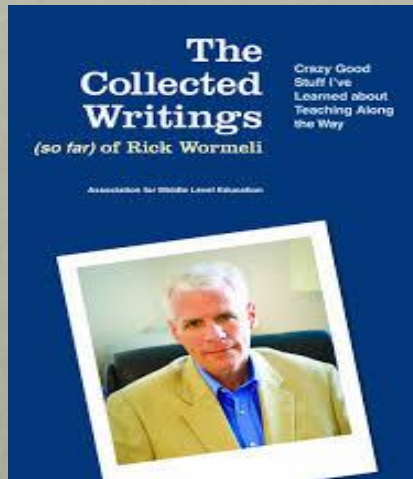
Tie in of Growth Mindset, Passion and Perseverance
and Student Success



This month's choice is...



Rick Wormeli



What are educational transitions?

Most students make many transitions in their school lives. They do so when they:

- begin early childhood (Preschool)
- start school
- change year levels within a school
- transfer from one school to another
- shift from Lower School to Middle School and on to Upper School
- Upper School to College



A student's transition can be complicated by the social, emotional, and physiological changes that can negatively impact their learning.



What is important?

- School and Family Partnerships
- Promoting Academic and Social-Emotional competence
- Continuity

The importance of a successful transition to kindergarten cannot be overstated.



What do successful transitions look like?

Students feel that ...

- They belong in their new school, and are included in school activities and programs
- They are positively connected to their peers, other students in the school and to their teachers
- Their teachers know them, including their strengths, interests, and learning needs



- they have a sense of purpose in being at school
- they have an understanding and commitment to their learning pathway through their schooling and beyond.
- they are making progress
- their current learning follows from their previous learning and is appropriately challenging
- learning is interesting and relevant
- they are physically and emotionally safe
- they have opportunities to try new, exciting things and/or extend their particular skills/interests



We can support students to make successful transitions by helping them develop a sense of themselves as competent and capable beings (*Growth Mindset and Grit from November Coffee Talk*) characterized by:

- A “can do” attitude
- A sense of self-capability
- Resourcefulness
- Resilience
- Strategies to deal with challenges
- Independence
- Skills relating to others such as listening actively , being tolerant and cooperation
- A sense of contribution to school and community



Coherence

Achieving positive transition outcomes requires schools to be coherent in their approaches to students' well-being and academic outcomes.

This coherence is achieved by:

1. developing a whole-school approach to supporting students as they come into the school, and as they move through year levels in the school.
2. Incorporating transition practices into curriculum and teaching and learning programs
3. Looking for synergies between transitions and the school's overall approach to promoting students health, well-being and learning.



It involves leaders working with staff to decide on and implement practices that support students when they come into the school and as they move through the school.



The school curriculum provides good opportunities to build students' capacities to adapt well during transitions. (January Coffee Talk)

Example: Curriculum and teaching approaches can incorporate opportunities for students to develop resilience, self-management, communication skills and strategies for dealing with challenges.



Middle and Upper School Advisors are there to help students progress through these divisions.

We have the opportunity to make these transitions a strength that other single division campuses cannot, but we need to be intentional in doing so.



In general, a comprehensive list of processes that contribute to smooth transitions include:

- setting up visits to the school prior to students' entry
- teachers introducing students to approaches to learning they may encounter in the next division.
- communicating transition information to families



- ensuring that students have strong learning foundations, and have developed self-efficacy skills (ie. planning, organizing skills)
- listening to students' concerns about going to the next division
- encouraging students to be positive about change and to take new challenges
- providing tailored opportunities for social and academic development
- helping students step up to leadership positions that help them to be independent and confident



FACTS

We have selected FACTS for our new comprehensive school information management system. The all-inclusive system will offer parents, faculty, students, and administration a level of ease of use and support that Oakwood has not been able to provide in the past.

The FACTS system includes a learning management system, attendance, grade books, teacher sites, teacher planners, parent billing, admissions, extended day, lunch ordering, and several other features all through a single login that will be housed on our website.



K-12 Solutions

ADMINISTRATION

Student Information System

Learning Management System

Online Application & Online Enrollment

Family Online

Parent Alert

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Tuition Management

Incidental Billing & Prepay Accounts

Advanced Accounting

Grant & Aid Assessment

Payment Forms

ENROLLMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

School Site

ADVANCEMENT

Giving

FACTS EDUCATION SOLUTIONS

Instructional Services

Professional Development

Professional Development Courses

ESSA Consulting

Teacher Evaluation

Webinars & Resources

Webinars

Blog

Events

Case Studies & White Papers



Lower School

- Self-contained classes with one primary teacher; this teacher is the main contact for parents.
- Students attend special classes as a group led by their teacher or teacher assistant
- Communication: in class with students AND also to parents (folders, email, etc.)
- Technology: students have assigned iPads to use in the classroom.
- Classwork is displayed



Human Development

- Infancy
- Young Childhood
- Later Childhood
- **PREADOLESCENCE** – more change occurs during adolescence than any other stage in life except infancy
- Adolescence
- Adulthood



The Lower Middle School Child at a Glance:

- Children's bodies change a lot at this age, which can leave children feeling uncertain about themselves.
- Children this age begin to develop the ability to understand different points of view.
- 9, 10, and 11 year-olds are increasingly interested in spending time with friends



Current Program

Students have 4 different core teachers (English, Math, Science, and Social Studies), which meet for 45-minute classes each day.

Students have an Advisory (homeroom) teacher. They meet each morning from 8:15-8:30 and one additional time each week.

Students make transition between classes without being led by their teacher.

Students are able to use their personal iPads on the first day of school.

Communication shifts with more of a focus on students (writing down homework in class, checking blogs, etc), yet frequent communication continues directly with parents via email.

Exciting Updates (coming Fall 2019!)

Students have 2 different core teachers, one for Math/Science and one for English/Social Studies.

Fewer Transitions between core classes and specials (Art, PE, Music, Spanish, and Technology)

Phased in use of iPads at the start of the year as students learn to manage a locker, transition to classes, and handle other executive functioning skills.

Communication shifts throughout the year (instead of all at once) - from weekly letters to monthly check-ins to quarterly newsletters.

Students will be provided with Daily Planners and be required to keep them up to date.



We are here to help with the transition to 4th Grade!

Transition Day for Students (April)

Locker Decorating Extravaganza for 4th Grade Students and their Families (August)

Technology Transition Night for 4th grade (and new 5th grade) Parents

I am always here to answer your questions or meet with you!



DEVELOPMENTAL COMPARISONS

LOWER MS

1. Creative Imagination
2. Love of Peers
3. Love of Culture
4. Able to reason concretely
5. Want to be part of a group

UPPER MS

1. Development of Self
2. Physiological changes
3. Searching for Role Models
4. Able to think formally
5. Social life is prime emphasis
6. Marked opinions yet sensitive to criticism



UMS at a Glance:

Traditional middle schoolers are often more physically mature than emotionally mature.



UMS at a Glance:

During this time, kids usually begin to be more aware of what's happening in the world and how that affects them.



UMS at a Glance:

Many 6th and 7th graders start communicating with more nonverbal language, like posture and tone of voice.



UMS at a Glance:

Major social and emotional growth:
struggle to fit in and look for ways to
be an individual.



In Upper Middle School

Grades 6 and 7 -

Advisory Program and Class Structure continues as in 4th and 5th grade.

Communication shifts again - students are held accountable for sharing information from class to home. Of course the effectiveness of this shift occurs at different rates based on the individual student. Parents can access information from their student and through teacher blogs. Emphasis is placed on fostering independence and personal responsibility in 6th and 7th graders.

When scheduling allows, students do not remain with their advisory grouping throughout the day. This initiative 'mixes it up' and creates opportunity for students to interact with all members of their grade in academic pursuits.



What Can Parents Do for their Middle School Child?

Provide TIME and PLACE for school work outside of the school day.

Help students practice time management and organizational skills.

Focus on 100% EFFORT, rather than 100% grades. Let your student experience the natural consequences of a missed or poorly done assignment now when the stakes are low, rather than when they get to Upper School (or even college).

Reach out to staff via email with your comments and concerns.

We are here to help!



Upper School

8th-12th grade--A time of transitions



Much like 7th in
curriculum; culture is
Upper School



More freedom and independence



No classes on transcript.

Get ready for Upper School and the
road to college.



How we help 7th graders with transition:

- visit with current 8th graders
- meetings with parents
- a whole year to become familiar with “high school”



9th grade–12th grade

Prescribed course of study with choices to help students prepare for college.

22 credits needed for graduation

English (4)

Foreign Language (2)

Math (4)

Fine Arts (1)

Science (3)

Electives (5)

History (3)



Advisory Time

Advisors meet with students daily, and students remain in the same advisory group throughout all 5 years of the Upper School



Meetings with Parents (along with rising 8th graders)

Talk about expectations for high school



Opportunities:

For example--change this year with Spanish and Latin in 8th grade to allow students to explore a new language without having to impact 9th grade FL options

Theater and Dance for 8th graders to give them an additional elective if they don't want a study hall

PSAT 8/9 (2nd year we've done this)



Consistent staffing for transition from 8th–9th

“Now, it COUNTS”

But students are already familiar



Engaged learning, strong teacher-student relationships

Mock trials

Scavenger Hunts

National History Day Projects

Skits

Science Labs
Competitions

Math and Science

Paideia Seminars

Harkness Table Discussions



Transition from Upper School to College

College Counselor meets with students their 9th grade year to review interests and set expectations.

Naviance Program

College Counselor meets with parents



Honor Council



Off Campus Education Week



Robust Clubs and Sports opportunities



Strong Fine Arts Offerings



Our goal in Upper School



References:

Oakwood Forms and Publications

Developmental Milestones for Typical Fourth and Fifth Graders
by Amanda Morin <https://www.understand.org/en>

Developmental Milestones for Typical Middle-Schoolers by
Amanda Morin <https://www.understand.org/en>





Thank you for coming today!

